

Comments on California Draft History-Social Science Framework

By Williamson M. Evers

My background on history-social science:

Research Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 1995-present

Ph.D., Political Science, Stanford University, 1987.

M.A., Political Science, Stanford University, 1978.

B.A., Political Science, Stanford University, 1972.

Commissioner, Academic Standards Commission, State of California, 2010. (Gubernatorial appointment.)

Member, Instructional Materials Review Committee, Capistrano (Calif.) Unified School District, 2009-2014.

Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C., 2007-2009 Non-Career Senior Executive Service. (Presidentially Appointed, Senate Confirmed.)

Senior Adviser to the Secretary of Education, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C, 2007. Non-Career Senior Executive Service. (Secretarial appointment.)

External Consultant and Member-at-large, Social Sciences-History Textbook Selection Committee, Palo Alto (Calif.) Unified School District, 2006-2007.

Member, National Advisory Council, Bill of Rights Institute. Arlington, Va. 2006-2007, 2009-present.

Consultant (on Middle Eastern history), History-Social Science K-8 Textbook Adoption, State of California, 2005-2006.

Member, Content Review Panel, History-Social Science K-8 Textbook Adoption, State of California, 2004-2005.

Member, Social Sciences Content Review Panel, Golden State Examination, State of California, 2003.

Member, Grades 10-11 Social Studies Standard-Setting Advisory Panel (test-grading guidelines), Texas

Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, State of Texas, 2002.

Member, History-Social Science Performance Level Setting Panel, Standardized Testing and Reporting system, State of California, 2001.

Member, Advisory Board, California History-Social Science Project. Office of the President, University of California System, 1999-2007.

Member, History-Social Science Assessment Review Panel, California Standards Test, Standardized Testing and Reporting system, State of California, 1999-2007.

Commissioner, Commission for the Establishment of Academic Content and Performance Standards, State of California, 1996-1998. (Gubernatorial appointment.)

My Recommendations

Chap. 7, p. 112, between ll. 534 & 535

Suggestion: Add material on internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII.

Rationale: Who signed the Japanese-American internment order? President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Who supported the internment? Earl Warren, Francis Biddle, William Douglas, Eleanor Roosevelt, Tom Clark, Carey McWilliams, Walter Lippmann, Hugo Black, Henry Stimpson, Abe Fortes, the U.S. Supreme Court. Why is this major event in Calif. History being left out?

Chap. 8, p. 135, l. 320.

Suggestion: Delete Olaudah Equiano

Rationale: His slave narrative is in major part fictional, and he was born in America, not Africa. See Vincent Carretta, "Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa? New Light on an Eighteenth-Century Question of Identity", *Slavery and Abolition* 20, no. 3 (1999): 96-105. Here is a Washington Post story on the issue: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/09/09/AR2005090902079.html>

Chap. 8, p. 145.

Suggestion: Add some detail to the points of view of characters in the simulation: like, believing in natural rights of individuals, customary rights of Englishmen, no taxation without representation, or obedience to established government.

Rationale: The existing detail is too weighted toward class, caste, and identity.

Chap. 8, p. 159, ll. 699-700.

Suggestion: Change to: “helped by Sacagawea, when the expedition came to her people”

Rationale: She did not guide the expedition.

Chap. 9, p. 167, l. 62.

Suggestion: Delete: “the”

Rationale: Error

Chap. 10 General Comment

The various religions are depicted in highly functionalist terms, that is, how did they help the rulers rule, help the society run. They developments in the religions are always depicted as shaped by environment, not as an unfolding of the belief systems of proponents in the face of unexpected circumstances.

Chap. 10, p. 205, l. 699

Suggestion: Change to: “which imagined a Mycenaean world ...”

Rationale: Homer came after Greek Dark Ages and was not in a position to “shed light” on Mycenaean world.

Chap. 10, p. 207, l. 711-3

Suggestion: Add something about the state slaves (helots) as part of reason Sparta was like a military base.

Chap. 10, p. 212, il. 826-32

Suggestion: Wording should specify that the Indic-speaking herders arrived in India from the northwest. The view that the language was indigenous is unsupportable and should not be included.

Chap. 10, p. 226, l. 1101

Suggestion: Add “a” -- “provided a very stable idea”

Chap. 11, p. 245, ll. 255-56

Suggestion: Add something about the defeat of the Romans by Arminius in the [Battle of the Teutoburg Forest](#) in 9 AD.

Chap. 11, p. 257, ll. 525-26

Suggestion: Change to: Muslims often did not force Christians or Jews, “people of the book,” to convert, people of other religions were more often forced to convert.

Rationale: There were forcible conversions sometimes. Change avoids overgeneralization about religions, see Appendix, p. 923.

Chap. 11, p. 25, ll. Between 533 & 534 –SEE ALSO chap. 11, p. 308, ll. 1568-9; chap. 15, p. 482, ll. 1164-65.

Suggestion: Add discussion of Sunni-Shiite split.

Chap. 11, p. 298, ll. 1397-8

Suggestion: Change to “...colonialism was an exploitative atavistic hold-over from times of conquest in an age of increasingly peaceful trade and commerce.”

Rationale: See Joseph A. Schumpeter, “Imperialism and Social Classes.”

Chap. 11, p. 300.

Suggestion: Add something about De las Casas and his argument that Indians were civilized and therefore should not be enslaved.

Chap. 11, p. 311, ll. 1651-2

Suggestion: Change to: “Why were natural rights, the social contract, and other ideas of the Enlightenment revolutionary?”

Rationale: Natural rights were the most revolutionary element here. The social contract could easily be interpreted in a passive obedience way – see Socrates’s comments before drinking the hemlock.

Chap. 11, p. 311, ll. 1663-65

Suggestion: Change to: “If the people are the basis of the state, and the state has been upholding the rights of the people, then they must act ...”

Chap. 15, p. 430, l. 173

Suggestion: Delete Thomas Hobbes

Rationale: Hobbes was not a civic reformer.

Chap. 15, p. 441, l. 398

Suggestion: Delete “or at least enjoy fair and just relations with employers”

Rationale: This is ideological.

Chap. 15, p. 443, l. 436

Suggestion: Change to: “...fueled by demand from special interests for natural resources and protected markets”

Chap. 15, pp. 443-44

Suggestion: Delete ll. 443-63

Rationale: The ideological thesis of “informal empire” is a basically Marxist interpretation and not in accord with scientific economics and historical facts. College and grad school classes debate this. It should not be taught as settled fact to K-12 students.

Chap. 15, p. 448, l. 551 ALSO even more misleading on p. 450.

Suggestion: Delete “Social Darwinian.” The leading Social Darwinists Herbert Spencer and William Graham Sumner were opposed to imperialism. Existing wording is quite misleading. Anti-social darwinists like the Fabians were pro-imperialism. See historical writings of Bernard Semmel.

Chap. 15, p. 458, l. 656-57

Suggestion. Current wording sounds as if Bolsheviks came to power as soon as Czar fell. Add something about the Provisional government led by classical liberals, social democrats, and peasant parties.

Chap. 15, p. 462, l. 753

Suggestion: Change the nickname Nazis to “National Socialists” – here and elsewhere. On intellectual importance of this, see: <https://youtu.be/r9cuxMRtduw>

Chap. 15, p. 464 l. 812

Suggestion: Change from “other conservatives:” to “other parties.” The phrase “other conservatives” here is a sneaky way of calling Hitler a “conservative.”

Chap. 15, p. 469

Suggestion: Either here or in chap. 7 or both, add material on internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII.

Rationale: Who signed the Japanese-American internment order? President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Who supported the internment? Earl Warren, Francis Biddle, William Douglas, Eleanor Roosevelt, Tom Clark, Carey McWilliams, Walter Lippmann, Hugo Black, Henry Stimpson, Abe Fortas, the U.S. Supreme Court. Why is this major event in Calif. History being left out?

Chap. 15, p. 474 l. 1024

Suggestion: Replace “a purer form of communism” with “a less repressive form of communism.”

Chap. 15, p. 477

Suggestion: Replace Fanon with some alternative reading. My suggestion is Nasser’s Charter of National Action, in Rejwan, Nasserist Ideology, sec. 6.

Chap. 16, p. 510 l. 173

Suggestion: Add something about the white supremacist views of Tom Watson and other Southern white populists.

Chap. 16, p. 516 l. 236

Suggestion: Add: “In addition to the rhetoric of reform, there was another side to progressivism, its proponents tended to favor government-fostered cartels to create an orderly but less competitive market (for example, Theodore Roosevelt). They reduced grassroots democracy and government close to the people by centralizing governmental power and instituting city-manager-led governments and superintendent-led school districts. They downplayed the U.S. Constitution’s role for the states and the separation of powers in favor of the rule of technical experts and expanded Presidential power. They (for example, the Wilson administration) opposed African-Americans getting a K-12 academic education.”

Chap. 16, p. 518 l. 277

Suggestion: Change “countered” to “harnessed.” T.R. did not oppose big business. He wanted to channel it according to his wishes.

Chap. 16, p. 519 l. 297

Suggestion: Delete Upton Sinclair

Rationale: Upton Sinclair’s The Jungle is fiction, not fact-based. See <http://fee.org/articles/ideas-and-consequences-of-meat-and-myth/>

Chap. 16, p. 527 l. 446

Suggestion: Add: anti-Catholic

Chap. 16, pp. 529-30 ll. 485-499

Suggestion: Completely overhaul.

Rationale: This is the third completely different explanation of the causes of the Great Depression in this draft Framework. Ridiculous. Many of the errors in these lines of the Framework, particularly the Hansen thesis, are addressed here: <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/GreatDepression.html>

Throughout, the Framework should have summaries of the Keynesian, Chicago, and Austrian School theories. Here is a summary of the Austrian explanation: “The Austrian theory of the BUSINESS CYCLE, which explains how credit expansion by the government generates a malinvestment in the capital structure during the boom period that must be corrected in the bust phase. In contemporary economics,

Roger Garrison is the leading expositor of this theory.” (footnote 3)
<http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/AustrianSchoolofEconomics.html>

Chap. 16, p. 531 l. 516

Suggestion: Replace with: American political leaders initially responded with the most expansive government intervention ever in American history – all the measures later found in the New Deal except for federal welfare payments.

Rationale: <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/HooversEconomicPolicies.html>

Chap. 16, pp. 531 ll. 531-2

Suggestion: Change to: “...created the principle that the federal government ...

Chap. 16, pp. 531 ll. 534-5

Suggestion: The Framework doesn’t explain the purposes of the AAA, NRA etc. Replace with: “New Deal Agencies that students can focus on are the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) and the National Recovery Administration, which cartelized business activity, reduced production, and fixed prices; and the Works Progress Administration, which built public works.”

Chap. 16, pp. 532 l. 549

Suggestion: Add between sentences: “Roosevelt was careful to target federal spending not on areas of greatest Depression-era decline, but on areas where his New Deal coalition was in political trouble.”

Rationale: “Reading (1973: 803) suggested, states were rewarded or punished according to the roles they played in electing FDR in 1932. A variant of that hypothesis was subsequently tested by Gavin Wright (1974), who found that a measure of ‘closeness’ of presidential vote shares in a state, along with the standard deviation of that variable, explained nearly 59 percent of the variation in the interstate distribution of New Deal funds. Other things being the same, states where presidential races historically were tight and party vote shares were more volatile received more New Deal largesse. FDR would have anticipated higher political returns per dollar spent in such states, compared with others where the Democratic Party’s vote share traditionally had been both either very large or very small and stable (reflecting entrenched voter positioning).” <http://what-when-how.com/public-choice/the-new-deal-public-choice/>

Chap. 16, pp. 542 ll. 778-98

Suggestion: Internment finally mentioned, but without analysis. Rewrite to indicate that there was no sabotage by Japanese –Americans and that the array of liberals and progressives listed above, all supported this internment.

Chap. 17, pp. 584 ll. 53-54

Suggestion: Replace with: “the effort, in the name of fighting corruption, to cartelize the economy and put technical experts in charge of public life.”

Rationale: See Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism*; Kolko, *Railroads and Regulation*. Also see:

Thomas C. Leonard: “The progressives’ impulse to use government to set the world to rights was tempered by their judgment that American government, and its party system, was, at all levels, badly in need of reform. Corrupt and decentralized, American government was, at once, the “locus of progressives’ hopes, and also the source of their unease” (Rodgers 1982, 125). The disparity between the government progressives imagined and the government they observed did not induce them to scale back their project of reform. Instead, they expanded it, to include government as well. Progressives at the forefront of economic reform imagined a kind of technocracy, where government experts could administrate, free (or at least insulated) from the partisanship and corruption they saw in American politics. In its more undemocratic versions, progressivism sought to subordinate politics to expert administration altogether (Haber 1964, 104).” (p. 125)
<https://www.princeton.edu/~tleonard/papers/otherbel.pdf>

Chap. 17, pp. 597 ll. 292

Point worth noting: Yick Wo was against racial discrimination by government in name of facially neutral laws. But it was not an early “modern” civil rights case. It was decided on different grounds.

Rationale: Best article on the subject:

http://www.law.gmu.edu/assets/files/publications/working_papers/08-55%20Revisiting%20Yick%20Wo%20%282008-09-03a%29.pdf

Chap. 17, pp. 601, after ll. 394

Suggestion: Add something on cooperative federalism and competitive federalism, two rival ideas of how federalism should work in our time.

Chap. 18, p. 624, ll. 257-9

Suggestion: Delete

Rationale: Economics is flat wrong.

Chap. 18, p. 625, ll. 292-6

Suggestion: Rewrite

Rationale: Contends that Great Depression caused by margin loans and 2008 recession caused by derivatives. For Great Depression, leaves out Chicago School contraction of money supply explanation; Austrian School artificial overinvestment (caused by regulation of banks) explanation. For 2008 recession, leaves out the role of federal policies that forced banks to lower their lending standards; Fed-engineered artificially-low interest rates; and Basel II standards.

Chap. 18, p. 636, ll. 539-543

Suggestion: Rewrite

Rationale: Contends that Great Depression and 2008 recession caused by lack of aggregate demand, as per Keynesian theory – a theory discredited by the stagflation of the 1970s. For Great Depression, leaves out Chicago School contraction of money supply explanation; Austrian School artificial overinvestment (caused by regulation of banks) explanation. For 2008 recession, leaves out the role of federal policies that forced banks to lower their lending standards; Fed-engineered artificially-low interest rates; and Basel II standards.

Appendix A, p. 865, ll. 633-34

Suggestion: One of the great ironies of the twentieth century was that colossal increases in economic productivity in the world produced betterment for all, but made relative differences felt more keenly.

Rationale: Reflects the facts and is consistent with descriptions of the data that follow in this appendix.

Appendix A, p. 894, ll. 1279- 1366

Suggestion : Delete.

Rationale: This entire section is ideological, tendentious. Anything of any merit in it is all ready covered in the duplicative, but much more solid section on globalization called “Worlds of Exchange” that begins on p. 855. Section on Impact of Globalization in chap. 15, pp. 492-96, ll. 1343-1422, should also be deleted or heavily edited to make the language more neutral and objective.